

Walsh CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125156
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359852
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marsha Moseley
Headteacher	Sue Roper
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 177 questionnaires from parents and carers, 12 from staff and 100 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of teaching at closing the gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing.
- Pupils' responsibility taking and their contribution to the community.
- The progress of pupils in the learning support centre.
- The role of leaders at all levels in school evaluation.

Information about the school

Most pupils come to this larger than average sized junior school from the local community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has a learning support centre for up to 18 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Originally designated a centre for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, the learning support centre is taking more pupils with a range of complex needs including autistic spectrum disorder, severe learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there was an acting headteacher in post following the promotion of the previous post-holder at the end of the spring term. The school runs a breakfast club each morning which is managed by the governing body.

The school has several awards including an Inclusion Quality Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This satisfactory school is moving forward at a steady pace under the clear direction of the acting headteacher. The school welcomes pupils with a very wide range of social and educational needs and the challenges this presents are embraced by all members of staff. Adults are particularly successful at helping pupils to develop a love of learning and an understanding of their place in the wider world. Pupils enthusiastically take responsibility and they make an excellent contribution to the community. They have many opportunities to share ideas with staff and their involvement in school development planning is an excellent example of adults taking account of pupils' views.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Recent initiatives mean that pupils' attainment has been improving and it is now broadly average. Although it is closing steadily, there is still a gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing. Pupils make good progress in reading, where a recently introduced reading programme is having a positive effect on learning. In other subjects, while teachers are very thorough in their planning, work is not always pitched at the right level for all pupils. This is most noticeable in writing. Pupils write with enthusiasm but they make too many errors in punctuation, grammar and spellings because the structure to the teaching of these skills is not always sufficiently clear.

The range of pupils' needs in the learning support centre has been changing over the last few years and they are becoming increasingly complex. Members of staff have not had sufficient training to prepare them for this change although, despite this, pupils in the centre make satisfactory progress. They benefit from high levels of adult support, but work is not always linked closely enough to each pupil's needs. Adults provide high quality care, support and guidance to ensure that pupils are happy in the centre. Pupils develop positive relationships with staff and almost all are responsive to the support they are given and learn to behave well.

A good curriculum and high quality pastoral support has a good effect on pupils' personal development. Pupils behave well and they thoroughly enjoy school, especially the wide range of clubs and visits. These greatly enrich the curriculum and contribute strongly to pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils become very responsible citizens and they support each other extremely sensitively. The school's International School award reflects its good contribution to community cohesion.

The school is improving because leaders, including those in the learning support centre, have created an ethos in which everyone is valued and respected. Leaders at all levels are involved in monitoring the work of the school, and their drive for improvement is based on satisfactory self-evaluation procedures. However, the school's view of how well it is doing is generous in some areas, especially with regard to pupils' attainment. The school has a wealth of performance data but these are not reviewed with enough rigour or sufficient

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frequency to check that all pupils are doing well enough and to identify where further improvement is needed. Nevertheless, there have been many successes in the last two years that are now securely helping to raise attainment. There continues to be an improving picture in the current year and this means that the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the accuracy of self-evaluation by leaders at all levels by making better use of performance data to check pupils' progress and to get a more accurate picture of where improvement is still needed.
- Improve pupils' progress, especially in writing by:
 - using assessment information to ensure that work is consistently pitched at the right level for all pupils
 - building upon pupils' enthusiasm for writing by ensuring that there is a clearer structure to how pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar skills are taught across the school.
- Provide training and support for teachers in the learning support centre so that there is a closer match between the work provided and the needs of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They thoroughly enjoy school and most attend regularly. From their broadly average starting points in Year 3, pupils make satisfactory or better progress in lessons, meaning that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils do best in those lessons when there is good challenge and opportunities to work independently. For example, in a good literacy lesson in Year 5, pupils made good progress as they learnt about persuasive writing. They worked hard and were fully engaged because they were encouraged to think for themselves and to compose their own responses to questions such as 'Are footballers overpaid?' In a satisfactory numeracy lesson in Year 6, pupils made steady progress in learning how to solve calculations, although not all worked quickly enough, slowing the pace at which skills improved.

In the learning support centre, pupils made good progress in a lesson where they were learning to use adjectives because work was closely linked to a pirate story they had been reading. At other times in the centre, skills improve steadily in lessons, but time is lost as pupils wait to take their turn when they are working all together. Other pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in lessons. There are occasions when they find work too hard, for example when asked to think about different variables in a satisfactory science lesson.

Relationships between classmates and adults are very good, with everyone helping each other when needed. Pupils are sociable and friendly and work hard, although they do not always present their work neatly enough. They develop good confidence and self-esteem and are very conscious of the needs of others. For example, when talking about the school's work with a local retirement home, one pupil commented, 'You can't just forget about old people.'

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The vast majority of pupils feel that they are kept safe and they are very clear about the dangers they may face in later life. They are confident that worries are dealt with quickly. Pupils happily adopt healthy lifestyles, keenly taking part in dance lessons and after-school clubs in sports such as table tennis and football.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Adults place pupils' well-being at the centre of their work. They willingly 'go the extra mile' to make school a happy and safe place to be for all pupils, including those in the learning support centre. There are good partnerships with outside agencies to provide additional support for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The well-managed breakfast club extends the work of the school very successfully and gives pupils a healthy and enjoyable start to the day. The school has been striving to improve attendance and is now working conscientiously to reduce further the small number of pupils whose learning is affected by absences.

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour extremely well and make learning exciting by, for example, dressing up as 'The Evil Teacher' to introduce a literacy topic. They often assess learning carefully and, where teaching is good, use this information to plan what to teach next. Such good practice is not evident in all lessons, especially in writing. There is a good pace to learning most of the time, but occasionally pupils sit for too long at the start of lessons. Marking and the setting of targets are becoming increasingly helpful, especially in

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English, in helping pupils to understand the next steps in their learning. In the learning support centre, teachers are aware of differing needs but do not always meet them well enough.

The curriculum contributes greatly to pupils' personal development and to their enjoyment of school. It takes good account of pupils' interests and aptitudes and is rich and varied. Pupils are provided with many exciting experiences such as working with the police as part of a speed watch initiative to talk to drivers who had been caught speeding outside school. Creativity is fostered very effectively as is demonstrated by the superb displays of artwork that can be seen around school. The school's work with an artist in residence is a good example of how partnerships with others help to enrich learning.

The school's Basic Skills Quality Mark reflects the school's strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills. Recent improvements in the curriculum mean that there are good opportunities for pupils to write and read in different subjects, although there is still too little structure to the teaching of grammar and punctuation.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has ensured that the day-to-day management of the school continues to run smoothly. Teamwork between staff is strong and the drive and ambition of leaders are soundly embedded across the school. Senior leaders are effective in focusing the school on the right priorities and there have been some helpful recent initiatives, especially in reading. Monitoring systems are thorough but evaluations do not always give an accurate enough picture of pupils' attainment and progress. The monitoring of teaching identifies where improvement is still needed and leaders are doing the right things to iron out remaining inconsistencies so that more teaching is good. Leaders in the learning support centre are aware that further training for staff is required now that the needs of pupils have become more wide-ranging than in the past. The governing body is supportive and enthusiastic but does not always provide enough challenge when important decisions are made.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination successfully. The school's commitment to providing a welcoming haven for pupils with a very wide range of social and educational needs is reflected in its well-deserved Inclusion Quality Mark. Leaders are aware of potentially vulnerable pupils and do the right things to ensure that they improve their performance to satisfactory or better levels. Pupils from different backgrounds show good respect for each other, reflecting the school's good contribution to community cohesion. Good engagement with parents and carers and strong partnerships with others

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mean that leaders are able to respond quickly to local needs. Pupils develop a secure understanding of their place in the world through regular contact with schools in the United Kingdom and beyond.

The school has good safeguarding procedures. Pupils' safety is given the highest priority and is constantly being reviewed to improve it further.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

In an above-average return of questionnaires from parents and carers, most were happy with their child's experience of the school. Positive comments included, 'The teachers' enthusiasm is great' and 'My child's confidence has come on in leaps and bounds.' A few parents and carers expressed concern about how the school tackles unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team saw none and found that the school has good systems for tackling it when it does occur.

A minority of parents and carers in one of the Year 4 classes expressed concern about the fact that the class is not always taken by qualified teachers due to difficulties in filling a vacancy. Inspectors did not see this happening during the inspection as a teacher was redeployed from elsewhere in the school to take the class due to staff absence. Data show that there are no significant differences between pupils' progress in the three Year 4 classes. A qualified teacher has been appointed to work in Year 4 in the next academic year.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walsh CE Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 177 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 310 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	42	91	51	7	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	102	57	74	41	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	79	44	85	47	9	5	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	74	41	87	49	14	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	76	42	97	54	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	39	94	53	12	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	32	110	61	8	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	50	28	110	61	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	66	37	102	57	8	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	32	99	55	18	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	23	119	66	8	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	63	35	103	58	6	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	75	42	92	51	8	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walsh CE Junior School, Aldershot GU12 6LT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about your work and completing our questionnaire. Your views were very helpful and you were very polite and friendly when we spoke to you. At the moment, your school provides a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

Some of the things we found out about your school.

- Satisfactory teaching means that you make steady progress as you move through the school, including in the learning support centre. At the moment you make the best progress in reading.
- You get on well together and help each other in and out of lessons.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and they give you suitable help when you find work difficult.
- The school plans lots of exciting things for you to do both in and out of lessons. The animal head sculptures are superb!
- You happily take responsibility for many things. The school council does a good job in ensuring that your voice is heard.
- Most of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.
- The acting headteacher and other leaders know what needs improving and are taking the right steps to move things forward more quickly.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that work is pitched at the right level for all of you and that the teaching of punctuation, spelling and grammar is more effective.
- Make sure that leaders are checking your performance so that they are certain that you are all doing well enough and to help them identify where improvement is needed.
- Make sure that teachers in the learning support centre always plan work that is suitable for you.

We wish you all well for the future. We hope you will all help your teachers by working hard and trying to present your work neatly all the time.

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper

Lead inspector

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